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Next Meeting: January 7, 2004
10:00 a.m. – Thorburn Center - Ingham ISD (Rooms B and C)

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Minutes of December 3, 2003, Meeting
10:00 a.m.

Present: Greg Bodrie, Patt Clement, Pansy Coleman, Cheryl Ervin, Sheri Falvay, Janice Fialka, Elaine High, Ric Hogerheide, Patricia Keller, Shari Krishnan, Jim Kubaiko, Paul Kubicek, Peggy McNeilly, Pam Mish, Sue Rabidoux, Anne Richardson, Debs Roush, Deb Russell, Steve Schwartz, Larry Simpson, Barbara Stork (for Jill Jacobs), Debbie Todd, Randall VanGasse, Colette Ward
Ex-Officio members: Lori Irish (for Sheri Falvay), Mark Larson, Rosanne Renauer

Absent: Kathleen Clegg, Lois Lofton-Doniver, Lee Martin, Michele Robinson, Jeff Siegel, Don Trap

OSE/EIS Staff: David Brock (for Jacquelyn Thompson), Fran Loose, Patti Oates-Ulrich

Guests: Lisa Dunsmore, Cherie Grasman, Sandi Laham, Monique Laverty, Jerry Oermann, Phyllis Rebori, Ruben Richardson, Glenda Williams, Jon Wurdock

The meeting was called to order by Chairperson Larry Simpson.

Roll Call

Roll call was taken and a quorum was present.

Introduction of Guests

Guests attending the meeting were introduced.

Amend/Approve Proposed Agenda

The agenda of the December 3, 2003, meeting was considered. Randy VanGasse moved, seconded by Ric Hogerheide, to approve the agenda as written. The motion carried.

Amend/Approve Minutes

The minutes of the November 5, 2003, meeting were considered. Ric Hogerheide moved, seconded by Patt Clement, to approve the minutes as written. The motion carried.

Public Comment

Deb Todd expressed concern over the size of transition programs. She would like to see limits placed on the student-teacher ratio in transition classrooms.

Chairperson's Report – Larry Simpson

A. No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and EdYes

A statewide grant brought together groups in Grand Rapids and Genesee County to assist education leaders with compliance with NCLB and EdYes. Larry participated in these meetings and presented a breakout session where the majority of the concern was related to special education, graduation and dropout rates, and schools not meeting adequate yearly progress related to NCLB. Larry was able to share some of the related information discussed last year in SEAC with the group. Advocacy continues to be a high priority.

State Reports – David Brock

A. Board of Education

At the November meeting of the State Board of Education, the Superintendent reported approval of the Iosco RESA Plan for Special Education. Two ISD Plans are scheduled for approval in December, St. Clair County ISD and Bay-Arenac ISD.

B. Department of Education

The US Department of Education (USDE), Office of Special Education Programs (OSEP) visited the department the week prior to Thanksgiving for a verification visit. OSEP was looking at what the Department has done since goals were set through the self-assessment and the Continuous Improvement Monitoring Process. They researched Michigan's website and perused material sent to them by the Department in preparation. The results were favorable; OSEP was impressed and indicated confidence in Michigan's leadership. Compliance with the 60-day timeline on complaint investigation was the only major area of concern. Two new complaint investigators were recently hired to fill positions that have been vacant for five years. This is expected to help bring the Department into compliance in that area. OSEP will issue a report in about sixty days.

The Great Lakes Area Regional Resource Center (GLARRC) will assist in developing Continuous Improvement Focused Monitoring, which is the next step. A design team meets for the first time on December 4 with the task of developing a new monitoring system in Michigan. A steering committee will help define what educational benefit really means and what indicators will show success. Once a proposal is completed, it will be submitted for public comment around May or June and then brought before the SEAC.

The summary of the public comment on special education rules will be discussed at the January meeting with the exception of the autism definition and the qualifications of the transition coordinator. The public comment reflected a need for further input from the field on both issues. The autism definition should be ready in February. A referent group is necessary to look at the qualifications of the transition coordinator. The executive committee discussed involving the Secondary Transition subcommittee in the work. People outside the subcommittee would be invited to participate. Ric Hogerheide moved, seconded by Anne Richardson, to involve the Secondary Transition subcommittee in the work. The motion carried.

Information Items

A. Proposed Changes to “Technical Assistance for Frequently Asked Questions”

David outlined what was changed from the original document in response to public comment. Pansy Coleman expressed concern over who sets time limits on evaluations. Steve Schwartz asked if there was a precedent set with regard to reasonable time limits. David explained that the state guideline is 30 school days, unless the parent and district agree otherwise. Discussion followed. Ric Hogerheide moved, seconded by Shari Krishnan, to assign further discussion and completion of the work to the General Supervision subcommittee. The motion carried.

Action Items

A. Michigan School for the Deaf Proposed Description and Operational Procedures

Pam Mish reported that after discussion, the General Supervision subcommittee felt confident that the residential placement option is still available although it is not specifically mentioned in the procedures. New language regarding outreach services is suggested in the action item. Paul Kubicek moved, seconded by Ric Hogerheide, to accept the language as written. The motion carried.

Ex-Officio Reports

Institutions of Higher Education — Mark Larson - The Faculty of Teacher Preparation Programs in Special Education is examining the state rules. Additionally, Wayne State University was recently informed by the Department that university teacher preparation programs will be graded on the success of their students passing the Michigan teacher competency tests. A group met at the University on December 2 with the goal of ensuring that the courses at Wayne State meet the state objectives.

Michigan Department of Community Health — Lori Irish - The Michigan Department of Community Health is hosting a training on Autism Spectrum Disorder.

Michigan Department of Career Development/Rehabilitation Services — Rosanne Renauer - None

Family Independence Agency — Lee Martin - None

Committee Reports

A. Secondary Transition – Larry Simpson

The subcommittee will finish their work on the unmet needs of individuals with disabilities in the correctional system. The transition coordinator qualifications will be discussed. Larry extended an open invitation to interested parties to attend the subcommittee meeting.

B. School Age - Debs Roush

The subcommittee continues to work on defining the effects of NCLB on students with disabilities.

C. General Supervision - Pam Mish

The Proposed Changes to “Technical Assistance for Frequently Asked Questions” will be discussed. Pam extended an open invitation to interested parties to attend the subcommittee meeting.

Member Issues

In light of the current focus on MEAP scores, Ric Hogerheide mentioned that despite the low economical status of his district, his district's MEAP scores improved in every area of the tests. Their special education population is high. Thanks to the hard work of the educators and parents, progress is being made.

Steve Schwartz requested clarification about how the special education population fits in with the overall view of schools considering the unintended consequences of NCLB. He wondered how public opinion would be affected when newspapers print that a school is failing because of the special education population. Larry related that he, Shari, and Randy plan to meet with Martin Ackley, the new Department of Education PR person, to request positive portrayal of special education in the media. Discussion followed.

Peggy McNeilly announced that Michigan Transition Services Association is holding a conference March 17-19.

Fran Loose pointed out that an update on IDEA mandated activities is provided today as requested at last month's meeting.

Janice Fialka mentioned that the first Disabled and Proud March will take place on July 18 in Chicago. More information is available at their website at www.disabledandproud.org.

Future Agenda Items

None

Peggy McNeilly moved, seconded by Patt Clement, to adjourn. The motion carried. The meeting was adjourned to subcommittee meetings.

Amanda Whitehead
Recording Secretary

SPECIAL EDUCATION ADVISORY COMMITTEE

Executive Committee
Minutes of December 3, 2003, Meeting
8:45 a.m.

Present: David Brock, Patt Clement, Ric Hogerheide, Shari Krishnan, Sandi Laham, Fran Loose, Pam Mish, Patti Oates-Ulrich, Debs Roush, Larry Simpson, Randall VanGasse

Absent: Jacquelyn Thompson

Review of Today's Agenda

Glenda Williams will meet with the secondary transition subcommittee today to help finish the work on unmet needs of students in the correctional system.

State Department Report

Jacquelyn Thompson is in Chicago for a NASDSE meeting. David Brock will serve as her alternate.

David will discuss the OSEP verification visit that took place in November. There is a group meeting December 4 to begin work on a new monitoring system. A steering committee is being formed for work in the spring.

David will update the SEAC on the status of the rules. Most public comment will be ready to present to SEAC in January, with the exception of the autism definition and the transition coordinator qualifications. David mentioned a referent group is needed to complete the work related to the transition coordinator qualifications. The executive committee discussed the possibility of involving the Secondary Transition subcommittee as part of that referent group. The chair will entertain a motion to involve the Secondary Transition subcommittee in the committee of the whole.

Debs Roush attended the November State Board of Education meeting and noted that the Board only considers curriculum with regard to No Child Left Behind.

Chairperson's Report

Larry will discuss the meetings that took place in Grand Rapids and Genesee County recently and concerns that surfaced related to NCLB and EdYes and their impact on special education.

Subcommittee Reports

A. General Supervision

The subcommittee will review changes to the Technical Assistance document. The subcommittee is also presenting an action item related to the MSD Procedures to the committee of the whole today.

B. School Age

Concerns over the effects of NCLB on students with disabilities continue to be the focus of the group.

C. Secondary Transition

The Secondary Transition subcommittee will hold a preliminary discussion on the qualifications of the transition coordinator in addition to working with Glenda Williams.

Future Agenda Development

Shari Krishnan suggested getting to know Martin Ackley, the new Michigan Department of Education PR person, so that special education might be favorably portrayed by him in the media.